

TOYOTA
TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1850 M STREET, NW, SUITE 800, WASHINGTON, DC 20036

TEL: (202) 775-1707
FAX: (202) 463-8513

February 19, 2003

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance - NSA-01
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

03V-074 ① of ⑤

Re: Toyota Celica Fuel Spillage
Part 573, Defect Information Report

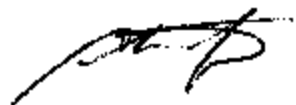
Dear Mr. Weinstein:

In accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and 49 CFR Part 573, on behalf of Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"], please find enclosed the attached Defect Information Report concerning a safety recall of certain 2002 and 2003 model year Toyota Celica vehicles to address a possible fuel spillage problem.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact Mr. Tsuyoshi Yokoi at (202) 775-1707.

Sincerely,

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.



Chris Tinto
Director

CT:ty
Attachment

RECEIVED
NVS-215
2003 MAR -5 A 10:32
OFFICE OF
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:

Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"]
1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-city,
Aichi-ken, 471-8571 Japan

03V-074 ② of ⑤

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company:

Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. ["TMS"]
19001 South Western Avenue
Torrance, CA 90509

2. Identification of Affected Vehicles:

Based on production records, we have determined the affected vehicle population as set forth in the table below.

Make/ Car Line	Model Year	Manufacture	VIN		Production Period
			VDS	VIS	
Toyota Celica	2002 - 2003	TMC	DR32T	20133346 - 30151426	March 25, 2002 through November 4, 2002
			DR38T	20133640 - 30151420	
			DY32T	20059149 - 30064689	
			DY38T	20059145 - 30064700	

Note: Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN ranges, not all vehicles in these ranges were sold in the U.S.

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Affected:

15,048

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Experience Malfunction:

Unknown

5. Description of Problem:

In the subject vehicles, there is a check valve installed at the lower end of the fuel filler pipe on the fuel tank to prevent fuel from flowing back from the tank when refueling is stopped. Due to improper assembly of the check valve, the valve may fall off into the tank during refueling. This condition could cause fuel to spill out of the fuel filler pipe when the tank is being filled and refueling is stopped by the auto-stop system of the fuel pump nozzle. In the worst case, this may result in a fire if in the presence of an ignition source.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

03V-074 ④ ⑤

Mid October 2002 through November 2002

TMC received field information regarding a Celica vehicle that was experiencing fuel spillage out of the fuel filler pipe when refueling was stopped. It was found that the check valves installed at the lower end of the fuel filler pipe on the fuel tank, which prevents the fuel from flowing back from the tank, had fallen off into the fuel tank. TMC immediately requested TMS to recover the fuel tank from the field for investigation. In the meantime, TMC checked the installed condition of the check valves of tanks in-stock and found no abnormality.

TMC subsequently commenced an investigation on the assembly process of the check valve and fuel tank to ascertain if there was a possibility that an external force was somehow being applied to the check valve after installation which could result in the valve coming off from the fuel filler pipe. As a result of the investigation, TMC found that the only force applied to the valve in the assembly process was the force applied when a rod on the air leak inspection machine used in the assembly plant pushed the check valve to release air from the tank after its inspection. It was also found that after changing the push rod cylinder in March, 2002, there was a possibility that the rod could push the valve slightly beyond the valve's maximum stroke, depending on the tank's setting position on the inspection jig, resulting in a disengagement of the claw at the end of the valve from the valve spring seat. TMC then immediately adjusted the stroke of the push rod to prevent the rod from over-extending the valve when the tank is set in the closest position to the push rod.

December 2002 through February 2003

TMC received the recovered part from TMS and investigated the details of the check valve. It was confirmed that the claws at the end of the valve were deformed, and it appeared to be in the same condition as the over-extended valve in the air leak inspection.

TMC then conducted replication tests to ascertain 1) if the disengaged check valve could come off during refueling, and 2) if there was the possibility that fuel could spill out from the fuel filler pipe without the check valve during refueling.

As a result, it was determined that;

- 1) The disengaged check valve could come off as a result of the pressure from the incoming fuel flow that occurs during refueling.
- 2) Just after the auto-stop system of the fuel pump nozzle is activated (i.e. refueling is stopped), the fuel could flow back from the tank through the fuel filler pipe due to the pressure generated in the tank during refueling, and there is a possibility that fuel may spill out of the fuel filler pipe.

Mid February 2003

Based upon the investigation described above, TMC concluded that the disengaged check valve might fall off into the fuel tank by the inflowing fuel pressure during refueling, and in this condition, the fuel could spill out of the fuel filler pipe when refilling is stopped by the auto-stop system of the fuel pump nozzle. Therefore, TMC decided that it would conduct a voluntary safety recall of the subject vehicle.

This safety recall will also be conducted in Canada, U.K., and Australia, and a safety campaign will be conducted in Japan and other countries.

7. Description of Corrective Repair Action:

All known owners of the subject vehicles will be notified by first class mail to return their vehicles to a Toyota dealer for inspection of the check valve and engage the valve if necessary. If the check valve is unable to be engaged or has fallen off into the tank, the fuel tank will be replaced.

Reimbursement Plan for pre-notification remedies

The vehicles involved were built between March, 2002 and November, 2002. As the owner notification letters will be mailed out well within the active period of the Toyota New Vehicle Limited Warranty ("Warranty"), all involved vehicle owners for this recall would have been provided a repair at no cost under the Toyota's Warranty.

8. Recall Schedule:

Mailing of the owner notifications will commence early April and be completed early May.

Copies of the owner notification and dealer instructions will be submitted as soon as they are available.

Make: TOYOTA	Model: Celica	Year: Late 2002, early 2003
NHTSA CAMPAIGN ID Number:		Recall Date: February 18, 2003
Component: Equipment: Fuel System: Fuel Tank		
Potential Number of Units Affected: 15,048		
Manufactured: The affected Celica vehicles were produced from late March, 2002 to early November, 2002.		
Summary: On 15,048 late 2002 and early 2003 Model Year Celica vehicles, the fuel tank check valve, located in the fuel tank inlet pipe, may become separated from the inlet pipe and fall into the fuel tank. If the check valve falls into the tank, fuel may spill from the fuel inlet pipe when the fuel pump automatically shuts off during fueling.		
Consequence: This condition may result in a fire if in the presence of an ignition source.		
Remedy: Toyota dealers will inspect and, if necessary, repair the fuel tank check valve. Owner notification is expected to begin in early April, 2003. Owners who take their vehicles to an authorized dealer on an agreed upon service date and do not receive the free remedy within a reasonable time should contact Toyota at 1-800-331-4331.		
Note: Customer can also contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4238).		

03V-074 ⑤⑤⑤